

general library service which tries to divide the field so that the various libraries will not be duplicating material but will be contributing to the service by taking care of their own particular fields.

III. *Letter from Doctor Kress to Assistant Librarian Gillis, answering some of her objections to State Medical Library Bill (S. B. No. 842).*

Los Angeles, April 29, 1929.

Miss Mabel R. Gillis,
State Librarian,
Sacramento, California.
Dear Miss Gillis:

Thank you very much for your letter of April 26 relative to the proposed state medical library. I regret that I cannot share the viewpoints which you express. It seems to me that you are in error in some of your conclusions because of lack of knowledge of the medical profession's viewpoints on these matters.

Let me explain myself somewhat more fully, even though the thoughts be somewhat at random:

1. Your experience at Sacramento in regard to the use of medical books by members of the Sacramento profession cannot be taken as a guide. When a medical man wants books or literature he wants a somewhat comprehensive presentation of the subject-matter in which he is interested. He wants something more than one or two antiquated textbooks. So far as I can learn, an efficient up-to-date medical library has never existed at Sacramento; so naturally our Sacramento colleagues would wish to utilize the facilities of the Lane Medical Library.

2. You state that it is your belief that a medical library is of most importance when it is in connection with a medical school.

Most of us who have been connected with teaching institutions and have at the same time had a wide experience with members of the medical profession and in organized medicine, hold quite a different opinion. A medical student has his work cut out for him when he confines his acquisition of knowledge to standard works. His knowledge of medicine is so incomplete that he is not in position, as an undergraduate, to attempt to read medical literature in general.

3. You state that money for a medical library should be used to build up those libraries already in existence.

We are in agreement with that thought, but we would accomplish this by having the state medical library coöperate with the Lane, Barlow, and University of California libraries in such fashion that duplication will be kept down to a minimum.

4. You state that it is your opinion that it would be many years before medical men could be induced to turn to the state library for their literature.

You probably have the official journal of the California Medical Association, which is known as CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE, on your shelves. That journal reaches more than four thousand ethical physicians every month. A state library column could be inaugurated therein, and within a few months it would be possible to induce many, many men in the profession from one end of the state to the other to avail themselves of the privileges of the state medical library at Sacramento. All of that is a matter of publicity, and, with the state medical association in back of the state medical library, we feel quite satisfied that the component county societies and their members would be very glad to avail themselves of its use.

5. We believe it would be possible to build up a state medical library that could render efficient service to members of the profession from one end of the state to the other. It would not be necessary to expend money in duplicating expensive works that are now in the Lane or other medical libraries.

6. You write that you would like to see the money diverted to some of the medical libraries already existent in the state.

I know of no way in which state money could be diverted into such private institutions. I mentioned

this point in an editorial which will appear in the May issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.

7. We appreciate, as do you, that it is necessary to have a trained medical librarian. However, the employment of a trained medical librarian is no different than the employment of a librarian trained in some other line of library work.

We realize that some of the money in this initial appropriation would necessarily be taken from the fund which it is desired to allocate from the reserve resources of the California Board of Medical Examiners to the state library. It is our belief, however, that funds will continue to come for the perpetuation of the library from the reserve funds of the State Board of Medical Examiners, because all we need to do is to again reestablish our two-dollar-a-year tax which was done away with at the last session of the legislature, and this would help bring in a goodly income each year.

8. Thank you very much for your invitation to have me talk over this some time, but I rarely get to Sacramento.

I am taking the liberty, however, of sending a copy of this letter to Dr. June Harris, who is a member of a local committee of the medical profession, and who is on the legislative committee of the California Medical Association, and who is particularly interested in this Senate Bill 842, which would provide for a state medical library division of the state general library.

I hope it will be possible for you to have a conference with Doctor Harris and his colleagues, because I believe that when you visualize this situation as we members of the medical profession outline it in our minds, you will be willing to coöperate with us, in fullest measure.

Cordially yours,

GEORGE H. KRESS, M. D.

IV. *Letter of State Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction giving his objections to the bill.*

(Letterhead of the Department of Education
State of California)

Post Office Box 615.

Sacramento, May 2, 1929.

George H. Kress, M. D.,
245 Bradbury Building,
Los Angeles, California.

Dear Doctor Kress:

I have your letter of April 23 and have a copy of Miss Gillis' reply thereto.

Inasmuch as Miss Gillis and I discussed this measure very carefully prior to the receipt of your letter, her reply is in effect the same as my reply would be, with the added knowledge which has come from her long service as assistant librarian.

May I make clear, if it is not already clear to you, that both Miss Gillis and myself are in entire sympathy with you in your desire to expend the surplus funds for a medical library. The only real point of difference is that Miss Gillis and I both feel that the library should be where the students are. If the amount of money you desire to expend were to be put into books which could be easily obtained by the students in the various medical schools this department would be strongly in favor of the expenditure of the money.

It is merely that there is a difference of opinion between you and us. Past experience has indicated that medical books have not been of much service when purchased by the state library or when distributed from the state library.

If I can serve you, assuming that you are convinced of the reasonableness of our position, I shall be very glad to do so in seeking to have this measure amended and passed. But two weeks remain of the present session and any changes which we may agree upon should be determined as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,

SAM H. COHN,

Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction.

[Editors' Note.—On the eve of the state medical meeting, the above letter was not answered.]